

Message Text

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INFO AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

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E.O. 11652:

TAGS: PFOR, MASS

SUBJECT: NY TIMES REPORTS U.S. MILITARY AID TO ANGOLA

1. FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF ARTICLE BY LESLIE GELB IN
NOVEMBER 7 NEW YORK TIMES ENTITLED, "U.S. AIDES TELL SEN-
ATORS OF ARMS AID TO ANGOLANS":

"TWO ADMINISTRATION OFFICIALS TOLD A SENATE COMMITTEE
TODAY THAT THE ADMINISTRATION WAS COVERTLY SUPPLYING
ARMS TO LIBERATION GROUPS IN ANGOLA, ACCORDING TO OFFICIALS
WITH DIRECT KNOWLEDGE OF THE TESTIMONY WHICH WAS GIVEN
IN A CLOSED SESSION.

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"UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE JOSEPH J. SISCO AND WILLIAM E. COLBY, DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE SAID THAT THE ADMINISTRATION WANTED CONGRESSIONAL SUPPORT FOR A SUBSTANTIAL AMOUNT OF BUDGETED ARMS AIDS FOR ZAIRE, ETHIOPIA AND KENYA. THEY DEFENDED BOTH TYPES OF AID ON THE GROUNDS THAT THE UNITED STATES NEEDED "BARGAINING CHIPS" WITH THE SOVIET UNION AND THAT IT IS AS IMPORTANT TO MAINTAIN THE BALANCE OF POWER IN AFRICA AS IT IS ANYWHERE ELSE, THE SOURCES RELATED.

"MR. SISCO SAID THAT THE MUCH PREFERRED AMERICAN POLICY WOULD BE TO LET THE AFRICAN NATIONS SETTLE THEIR OWN PROBLEMS PEACEFULLY BY THEMSELVES. HE SAID THAT SECRETARY OF STATE HENRY A. KISSINGER HAD MADE EFFORTS TO TALK TO THE RUSSIANS ABOUT MUTUAL RESTRAINT AND HAD PROMISED TO DO SO AGAIN.

"WHEN QUESTIONED BY SENATOR DICK CLARK, DEMOCRAT OF IOWA AND CHAIRMAN OF THE AFRICA SUBCOMMITTEE OF THE SENATE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE, ABOUT THESE EFFORTS AT DIPLOMACY, MR. SISCO RESPONDED THAT WASHINGTON HAD NOT BEEN IN A GOOD POSITION TO BARGAIN WITH MOSCOW IN THE PAST BUT THAT THE AMERICAN POSITION WAS STRONGER NOW.

"THE CLOSED SESSION OF THE SENATE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE PRODUCED A WIDE-RANGING EXCHANGE. SENATOR CLARK REPORTEDLY ARGUED THAT THE MILITARY ORIENTATION OF AMERICAN POLICY WAS ALIENATING AFRICAN LEADERS OF THE FUTURE AND MR. SISCO RESPONDED THAT THE UNITED STATES ALSO HAD TO DEAL WITH THE IMMEDIATE PROBLEMS OF SOVIET INFLUENCE.

"MEANWHILE, MR. KISSINGER TOLD THE HOUSE INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE TODAY THAT HE WAS DISTURBED BY SOVIET INTERVENTION WITH ARMS AID IN AFRICA, WHERE IT HAS NO VITAL INTERESTS AT STAKE. BUT HE SAID THAT THERE WAS "NO RISK OF DIRECT CONFLICT" WITH MOSCOW IN THAT PART OF THE WORLD.

"HE ALSO STATED FOR THE FIRST TIME THAT CUBA AS WELL AS

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THE SOVIET UNION WAS SUPPLYING AID TO THE POPULAR MOVEMENT FOR THE LIBERATION OF ANGOLA. HE SAID NOTHING OF COVERT SUPPLY OF UNITED STATES ARMS THROUGH THE CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY TO TWO OTHER LIBERATION GROUPS IN ANGOLA, THE PORTUGUESE TERRITORY IN SOUTHWESTERN AFRICA THAT IS TO BECOME INDEPENDENT TUESDAY.

"THE NEW YORK TIMES PREVIOUSLY REPORTED THAT SUCH COVERT

AID WAS BEING FUNNELLED INTO ANGOLA WITH THE HELP OF PRESIDENT MOBUTU SESE SEKO OF ZAIRE. ASKED TO DEFEND THE CURRENT ADMINISTRATION REQUEST FOR AID TO ZAIRE, MR. KISSINGER RESPONDED THAT PORTS IN ZAIRE AND ZAMBIA DEPENDED ON RAILWAY TRAFFIC THROUGH ANGOLA.

"THE ADMINISTRATION IS ASKING CONGRESS FOR A LARGE INCREASE IN FOREIGN MILITARY AID TO ZAIRE--39.4 MILLION DOLLARS, AS COMPARED WITH 3.8 MILLION DOLLARS LAST YEAR. IN ADDITION, THE ADMINISTRATION IS SEEKING 40 MILLION DOLLARS IN FOOD AID CREDITS AND EXPORT-IMPORT BANK LOANS.

"MILITARY AID TO KENYA AND ETHIOPIA ARE DOWN SOMEWHAT COMPARED WITH LAST YEAR, BUT WITH TWO NEW ELEMENTS IN THIS YEAR'S REQUESTS. THE 3 MILLION DOLLARS REQUEST FOR KENYA INCLUDES 1 MILLION DOLLARS TO BEGIN A MILITARY TRAINING PROGRAM. THIS YEAR ETHIOPIA HAS ALREADY MADE CASH PURCHASES OF MILITARY EQUIPMENT, MAINLY AIRCRAFT, TOTALLING MORE THAN 25 MILLION DOLLARS AS COMPARED WITH TOTAL CASH PURCHASES LAST YEAR OF 14 MILLION DOLLARS.

"MR. KISSINGER TOLD THE HOUSE COMMITTEE THAT THE ONLY AMERICAN INTEREST IN AFRICA WAS IN THE INDEPENDENCE OF ITS NATIONS.

"MR. SISCO ALSO SOUNDED THIS THEME BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE AS HE JUSTIFIED THE ADMINISTRATION'S COVERT SUPPLY OF RIFLES, MACHINEGUNS, VEHICLES AND AMMUNITION TO THE TWO ANTI-SOVIET LIBERATION MOVEMENTS IN ANGOLA. HE MAINTAINED THAT THE UNITED STATES DID NOT WANT TO DEFEAT THE SOVIET-BACKED LIBERATION GROUP BUT SOUGHT TO MAKE THE OTHER GROUPS STRONG ENOUGH TO NEGOTIATE A COALITION
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GOVERNMENT, THE SOURCES SAID.

"UNDER QUESTIONING THE SOURCES CONTINUED, MR. SISCO AND MR. COLBY ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THEY WERE NOT OPTIMISTIC ABOUT A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT IN ANGOLA, NOR WERE THEY CLEAR ON WHAT STEPS THE ADMINISTRATION MIGHT TAKE NEXT. THE SOURCES SAID, HOWEVER, THAT THE TWO SENIOR OFFICIALS ARGUED THAT THE GROUPS BEING BACKED BY THE UNITED STATES AND CHINA WERE IN A BETTER POSITION TODAY THAN BEFORE THE COVERT AID BEGAN. UNQUOTE

2. FOLLOWING IS TRANSCRIPT OF EXCHANGE ON GELB ARTICLE AT PRESS BRIEFING GIVEN BY DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN NOVEMBER 7:

Q BOB, WHAT CAN YOU TELL US ABOUT THE U.S. SUPPLYING
ARMS IN A CLANDESTINE MANNER TO THE NATIONAL FRONT
FOR THE LIBERATION OF ANGOLA AND UNITA?

A WELL, I'VE READ, AS YOU HAVE, SOME STORIES AND TICKERS
ON THIS SUBJECT; AND WE'RE NOT GOING TO HAVE ANY COMMENT
ON STORIES BASED ON TESTIMONY GIVEN BY OFFICIALS IN
EXECUTIVE OR CLOSED SESSION TO ANY CONGRESSIONAL
COMMITTEES. THIS IS A STANDARD THING, AND I JUST HAVE
NO COMMENT WHATSOEVER ON THIS AT ALL. KISSINGER

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